(b) whether it is a fact that for conducting researches on the causative organism of leprosy, Armadillo, a south American mammal; would be required; and

(c) if so, what steps Government have taken to regularise its import on a permanent basis?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (MISS KUMUDBHEN M. JOSHI): (a) The estimated number of leprosy patients in the country is 4 million which is about 1/4th of the total number of patients in the world. It is not a fact that the State of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu are lagging behind in the implementation of the National Leprosy Eradication Programme.

(b) and (c) Armadillo is required for research in leprosy on a selective basis to multiply laprae germs. It is not indispensable for research as lepra germs can also be taken from germ bank.

Armadillo were imported by CJIL, Agra and SLRTC, Karigiri, North Arcot.

Goitre control through iodized salt

1612. SHRI ARABINDA GHOSH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about 40 million Indians are affected with endemic Goitre;

(b) if so, what measures Government have taken so far to check it;

(c) whether Government are aware of the fact that insufficient production of iodized salt, iodized sodium chloride and iodized oil injection and other fortifications, is making it difficult for the National Goitre Control Programme to succeed; and

(d) if so, what is the number of iodization plants that Government propose to instal during the remaining period of the Sixth Five Year Plan?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (MISS KUMUD BEN M. JOSHI): (a) to (d) It is estimated that nearly 40 million people are suffering from Goitre. To tackle the disease, the National Goitre Control Programme is in operation in the endemic areas with focus on the supply of iodised salt for human consumption.

Though iodized sodium chloride, iodized injection etc. are available, the strategy of iodisation of salt has been found to be cheapest and acceptable under the National Goitre Control Programme. 12 iodisation plants are already functioning in the country. In dization Plants are also expected to be installed in Himachal Pradesh during current year.

In order to augment the production of iodized salt, State Governments/ U.T. Administrations have been advised to encourage commercial production of iodized salt both in the Public and Private Sectors.

C.G.H.S. pharmacists

1613. SHRI RAM PUJAN PATEL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to refer to reply to Unstarred Question 2476 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 14th December, 1983, and state:

(a) the details of recommendations made by the Committee constituted to look into the grievances of C.G.H.S. pharmacists, the date of submission of its report to Government and the recommendations implemented since then; and

(b) if the recommendations have not been implemented, what are the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (MISS KUMUD BEN M. JOSHI): (a) and (b) The Committee which was constituted to look into the grievances of C.G.H.S. pharmacists submitted its report on 2-5-1979